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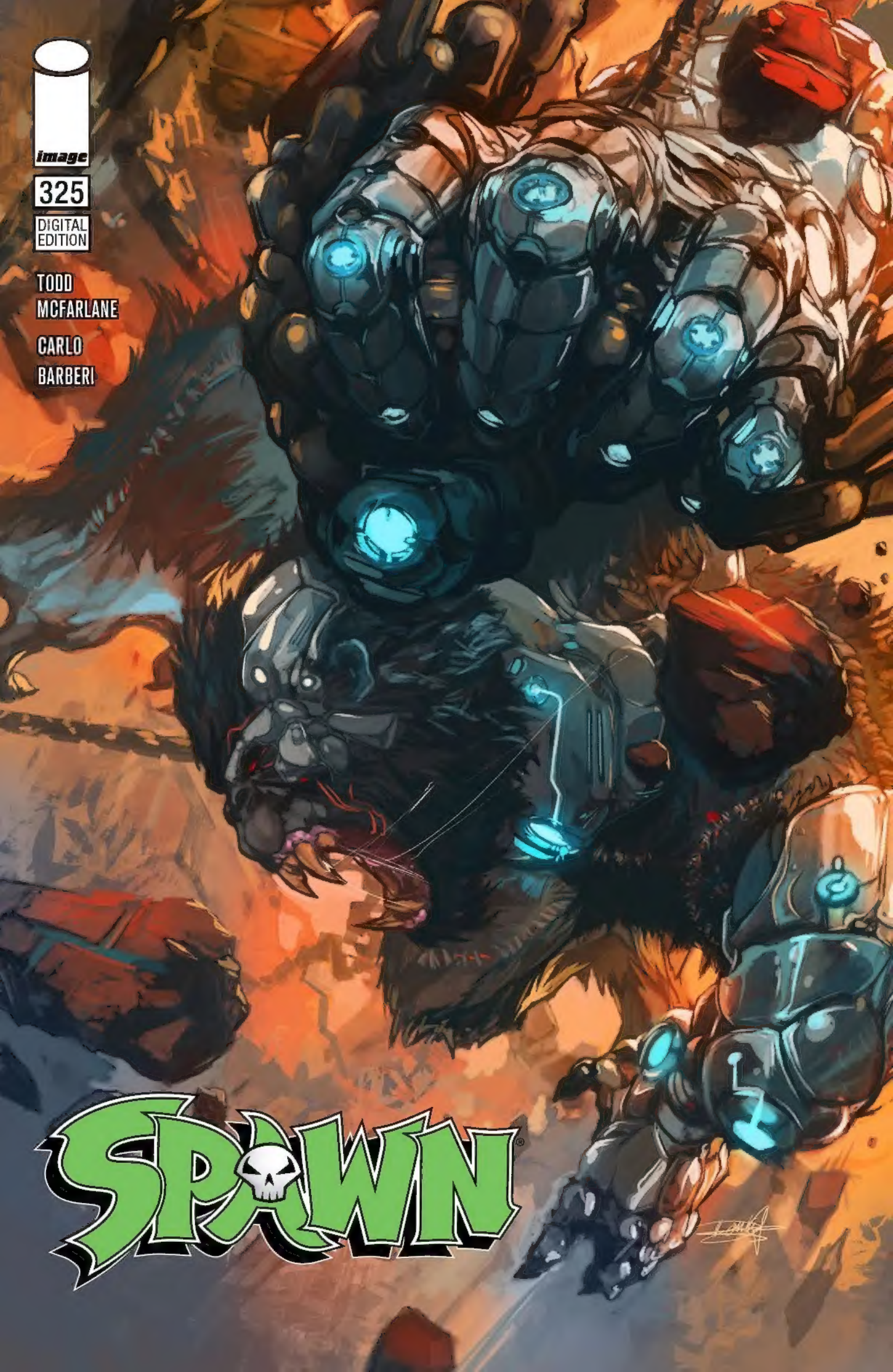
DIGITAL EDITION
SPAWN
TODD MCFARLANE
CARLO BARBERI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TODD MCFARLANE
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SPAWN

SPAWN

SPAWN'S UNIVERSE 92 21

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PREVIOUSLY IN *SPAWN*

Marc Rosen has been at Al's side for what seems like an eternity. Putting his life on the line for a man whose cause he believes in. Now, with his newfound powers, doubt is beginning to creep in, and the words of Jim Downing are starting to make sense.

image

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FOR THIS CENTURION SPAWN, TIME WAS BEGINNING TO RUN OUT.
TWO DAYS AGO, HE WAS AMBUSHED. HE KNEW THAT, BEFORE LONG, THIS MOMENT WOULD COME.
IT WAS JUST A QUESTION OF WHEN.

CENTURION HAS HEARD MANY TALES ABOUT HIS PURSUER, ONE OF THE FEW BEINGS IN EXISTENCE TO SPARK ACTUAL FEAR IN HELL'S ARMIES.
SKITKK
THOUGH THIS OUTCOME MAY APPEAR TO BE WRITTEN ALREADY...
...IF THIS IS TO BE HIS END, HE WILL NOT ACCEPT IT QUIETLY.

CENTURION'S COUNTRYMEN WOULD BE SHOCKED TO SEE HIM BROUGHT SO LOW.
IN HIS OWN TIME, IT WAS HE WHO BROUGHT FEAR, AS HE WAS CAPABLE OF BESTING ENTIRE ARMIES SINGLE-HANDED.
HE'S A LONG WAY FROM HIS OWN TIME, THOUGH...
...AND THE ARMIES HE FACED WOULD BE MERE GNATS COMPARED TO HIS CURRENT FOE.
<LET ME DIE WITH HONOR.*>
*Translated from Latin.
OTHERS MIGHT HAVE GRANTED HIS REQUEST, BUT THIS ATTACKER WAS FORGED IN BLOOD AND FIRE, A PROCESS THAT PURGED HIM OF MERCY.

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY NAMES FOR HIM THROUGHOUT HISTORY...
...BUT TO MOST, HE IS KNOWN AS
the
FORSAKEN.

"--OVER 200,000 PEOPLE DESCENDED ON WASHINGTON THIS AFTERNOON. WHILE EFFORTS HAVE LARGELY BEEN PEACEFUL, THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF SEVERAL ARRESTS THROUGHOUT THE DAY, AS SOME PROTESTORS TURNED VIOLENT.
"THIS IS THE LATEST MARCH THAT'S TAKEN PLACE SINCE LT. COLONEL AL SIMMONS ISSUED HIS PLEA SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, CALLING ON PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD TO DEMAND GREATER TRANSPARENCY FROM THEIR LEADERS."
WE NEED TO DEAL WITH THIS, AND SOON. I'M GETTING A LOT OF PUSHBACK FROM SOME OUTSIDE CLIENTS.
WE'VE BEEN LETTING THOSE THAT DECIDED TO FOLLOW SIMMONS' AGENDA, DRIVE THE NARRATIVE ON THIS FOR TOO LONG.
IT'S STARTING TO GET OUT OF CONTROL. THE MORE THEY MARCH, THE MORE QUESTIONS THE MEDIA ASKS.
NONE OF IT IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

Oh C'MON, CORDELIA. THAT'S A BIT PARANOID, DON'T YOU THINK?
THESE THINGS COME AND GO. IF ANYTHING, IT GIVES HUMANS A HARMLESS LITTLE OUTLET TO VENT THEIR FRUSTRATIONS. AND AS WE KNOW, THEY'RE ALWAYS FRUSTRATED AT SOMETHING.
MAYBE BEFORE, BUT WE'RE OPERATING IN A DIFFERENT WORLD NOW. WE LEAVE THIS UNCHECKED, IT'LL KEEP BUILDING AND BUILDING, AND THEN WE'RE F*CKED.
SO, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU, BUT I HAVE NO PLANS TO SURRENDER THE LIFE I'VE BUILT HERE BECAUSE A BUNCH OF LIBERAL YOUTHS DON'T LIKE CAPITALISM.
BUT THE MORE THEY PRY, THE HIGHER THE LIKELIHOOD SOME HUMAN IS GOING TO FIGURE OUT THE TRUTH, EVEN IF IT'S BY ACCIDENT. THAT'S ONLY GOING TO MAKE IT HARDER ON US AS THE WAR RAMPS UP.
OH GOOD, AT LEAST WE'RE ALL ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THERE IS A WAR GOING ON. I WAS WONDERING WHEN WE WERE GOING TO ASK, WHY ARE WE WASTING OUR TIME WITH THIS LOW-LEVEL CRAP WHEN, SOON, THERE MIGHT NOT EVEN BE A PLANET TO RULE OVER.
WE NEED TO BE DEALING WITH SPAWN, THEN WE NEED TO HELP OUR POSITION IN CASE THE WAR SPILLS OUT FASTER THAN WE HOPE. SO, WE NEED TO FIND SPAWN AND CONVERT HIM TO OUR SIDE.

IF WE DON'T, SOMEONE ELSE WILL.
THE THRONE OF HELL ISN'T GOING TO STAY EMPTY INDEFINITELY. AND SINCE THE "TIME SHIFT," IT'S GOING TO BE A STAMPEDE RACING FOR IT.
AND RIGHT NOW, WE DON'T KNOW WHO'LL GET THERE FIRST, BUT IT SURE AS SHIT CAN'T BE SPAWN. HE CAN'T GET ANY-WHERE NEAR THE THRONE. IT'S WHY WE NEED TO CONVERT HIM.
HE'LL DESTROY US OTHERWISE, LIKE HE DID THIS WEEK. HOW MANY OF OUR KIND HAS HE KILLED?
AND HOW DO WE KNOW THE OTHER CONTENDERS WON'T HAVE US STRUNG UP AS *TRAITORS?*
WHOEVER TAKES THE THRONE ISN'T GOING TO CARE ABOUT CONTINUING THE OLD MISSIONS. THAT'LL BUY US PLENTY OF TIME.
ULTIMATELY, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO PICK A SIDE, BUT FOR NOW I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY RUSH TO PIN OUR FLAG ON ANYONE'S MAST. WE CAN BE PATIENT AND SEE HOW THINGS DEVELOP.
STAY ON THE SIDELINES AND WAIT FOR THE CONTENDERS TO REVEAL THEMSELVES. ONCE WE SEE A LIKELY WINNER, *THAT'S* WHEN WE MAKE OUR DECISION.
WE DO OUR JOB AND WE'LL HAVE LEVERAGE. IF SPAWN'S ON OUR SIDE, WE CAN OFFER HIM AS A SACRI-FICE TO THAT WINNER. THAT MOVES US CLOSER TO THE INNER RING.
CAN I JUST ASK... WHY ARE WE SETTING OUR SIGHTS SO LOW?
WHY AREN'T WE TALKING ABOUT INSTALLING ONE OF *OUR OWN* ON THE THRONE?

YOU WANT TO TAKE A SHOT? BE MY GUEST. BUT YOU WON'T GET ANY ASSISTANCE FROM ME.
BECAUSE EVEN IF YOU DO SUCCEED, ALL YOU'LL BE DOING IS ENSURING A TARGET ON YOUR BACK FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE. BUT IF WE'RE ONE OR TWO STEPS AWAY FROM THE TOP, IT ALLOWS US TO REPENT AND CHANGE SIDES.
THE WAR CAN WAIT. IF THE HUMANS FIND OUT THE TRUTH, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO WINS
DEALING WITH SIMMONS AND HIS MOVEMENT IS THE SMART PLAY FOR NOW.
SO, WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE?
SIMMONS HAS TOLD HIS STORY TO THE PUBLIC...
IT'S TIME TO TELL THE HUMANS A DIFFERENT ONE.

"THE BIG QUESTION, OF COURSE, IS WHERE IS SPAWN?
"SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, Lt. COLONEL AL SIMMONS MADE A FLURRY OF CONTROVERSIAL MEDIA APPEARANCES, BUT SINCE THOSE ANNOUNCEMENTS HE HASN'T MADE ANY FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENT. OR BEEN SEEN AT ALL.
"THE ALLEGATIONS HE MADE HAVE NOW LIT A FIRE IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE. SO, SPAWN, IF YOU'RE OUT THERE, WE'D GLADLY GIVE YOU A NATIONAL FORUM TO EXPAND ON YOUR STATEMENTS."
AL SIMMONS NEVER INTENDED TO BECOME A PUBLIC FIGURE
AL HE WANTED WAS TO NUDGE HUMANITY IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, TO START THEM ON THE JOURNEY TOWARDS UNCOVERING THE TRUTH
TO PIECE TOGETHER THIS PUZZLE ON THEIR OWN
EVEN IF HE'D CRAVED CELEBRITY HE WOULDN'T HAVE TIME TO EMBRACE
OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, HIS ATTENTION HAS BEEN CONSUMED BY AN EVER-INCREASING NUMBER OF NEW THREATS
AND THOUGH HE HATES TO ADMIT IT, HE KNOWS ONLY ONE MAN WHO CAN HELP HIM FIX THAT PROBLEM

--DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT ME TO SAY, GERRI. WHAT DID HE THINK WAS GOING TO HAPPEN?
OF COURSE, HE KNOWS STOCKS CAN DROP.
YEAH? WELL IF HE'S GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT, POINT HIM TO THE GIANT RISKS AND DISCLAIMER ON HIS DAMN CONTRACT.
I KNOW. I KNOW. I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW SOMEONE SO SMART CAN BE SO STUPID.
ARNOLD'S WINDPIPE SUDDENLY SQUEEZED SHUT
WHERE'S COGLIOSTRO?

Gasp!
WHY'RE YOU DOING THIS TO ME?!
DON'T WASTE MY F*CKING TIME, ARNOLD. I KNOW ABOUT THE LITTLE CLUB YOU TWO WERE IN.
WHERE IS HE?
I'M NOT... PART OF THAT ANYMORE, I SWEAR! COG AND I HAVEN'T SPOKEN IN YEARS.
WE HAD A FALLING OUT A LONG TIME AGO.
THAT SO? WELL, I SAW HIM RECENTLY. SEEMED LIKE HE'D GOTTEN HIMSELF INTO SOME TROUBLE.*
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY OF THAT... BUT, THE LATEST I HEARD IS THAT HE'S GONE.
GONE WHERE?
*Spawn's Universe #1 - Todd
I SAID I DON'T KNOW, BUT IF IT'S TRUE, IT'S BECAUSE THAT BASTARD IS PLANNING-- NOT HIDING.
HIS AMBITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO WANT TO LEAVE HIS MARK. I'D BE CAUTIOUS IF I WERE YOU.

IT'S THE SAME ANSWER EVERYWHERE HE GOES
NO ONE'S SEEN A TRACE OF COGLIOSTRO IN MONTHS
THE LAST TIME SPAWN CROSSED PATHS WITH HIM WAS ON OMEGA ISLAND, WHILE BOTH WERE PRISONERS OF DISRUPTOR
SPAWN ASSUMED COG FOUND A WAY TO ESCAPE SOMEHOW, BUT AS HE THINKS BACK, HE REMEMBERS HOW TIRED AND FEEBLE COG HAD LOOKED. MAYBE HE DIDN'T ESCAPE
SPAWN HIMSELF BARELY SURVIVED TWO TRIPS TO THAT ISLAND AND DOESN'T WANT TO RISK A THIRD UNLESS IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY
IF HE CAN FIND COG SOON, HE MAY NOT HAVE ANY CHOICE

EXPERIENCE TAUGHT SPAWN NOT TO TRUST HIS FORMER MENTOR, BUT IF THERE'S ONE THING COG DOES UNDERSTAND, IT'S HELLSPAWNS.
THE TEAR THAT SPAWN CREATED IN TIME MAY POSSIBLY BE FIXED, BUT ONLY BY THAT KNOWLEDGE
SO, WITH NOT A LOT OF OPTIONS, SPAWN SPENDS THE NEXT FEW HOURS CHASING DOWN LEADS UNTIL
OKAY. OKAY!

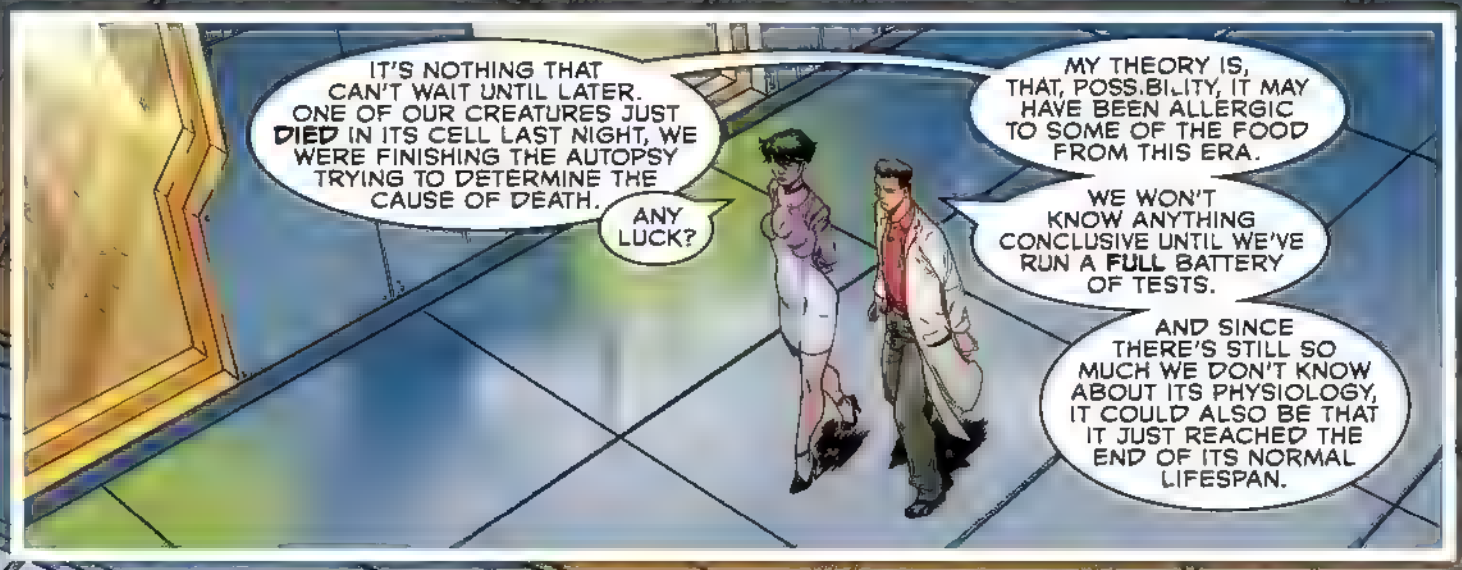
THERE'S A GUY IN LUCIEN FEGREDO'S CREW.
FEW WEEKS BACK, HE SAYS COGLIOSTRO SHOWED UP FOR A MEETING WITH FEGREDO.
"WHO'S FEGREDO?"
"A MID-LEVEL LIEUTENANT WHO'S BEEN A PAIN IN MY ASS FOREVER, RUNS CONSTRUCTION ACROSS THE WEST COAST.
"HE'S ON HEAVEN'S SIDE, IN THEORY, BUT HE'LL WORK WITH ANYONE WHO CAN ADVANCE HIM."
THAT'S TOLERATED?
FOR NOW. HE KEEPS IT WELL HIDDEN FOR THE MOST PART, AND HE'S GOT ENOUGH ALLIES IN HIS CORNER.
WHAT WAS THE MEETING ABOUT?
DON'T KNOW. MY GUY WASN'T IN THE ROOM.
WHERE'S FEGREDO NOW?

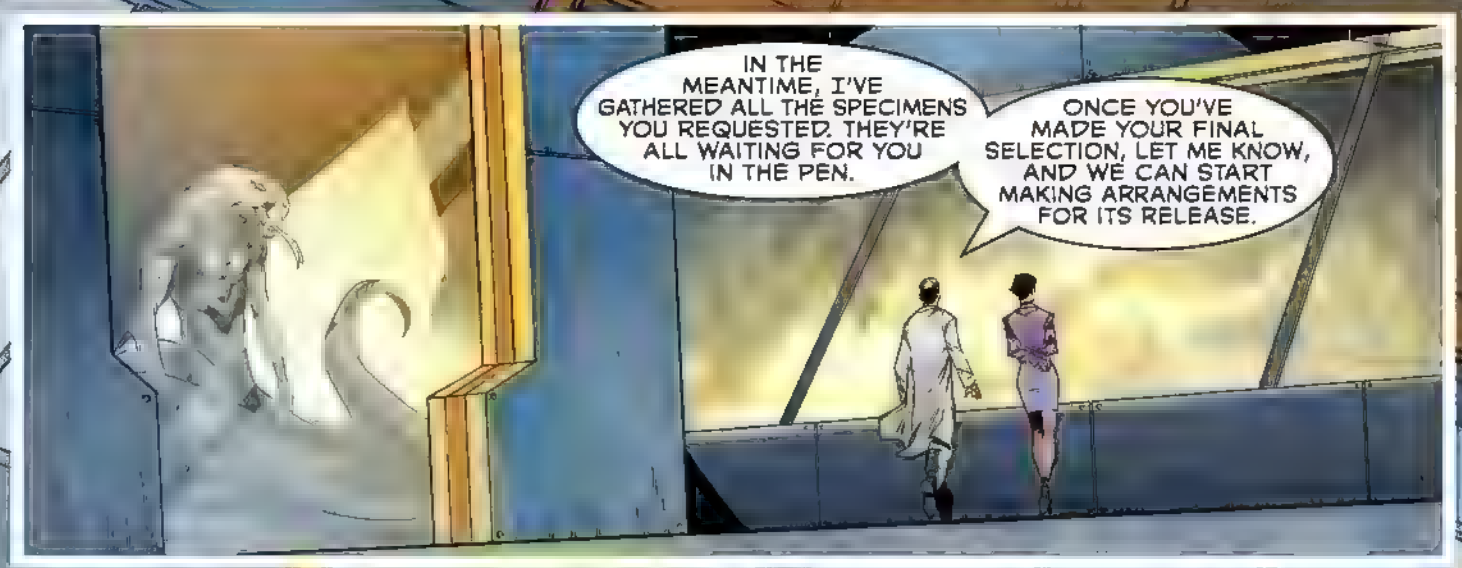
CHRIST.
THE STENCH OF DEATH HITS SPAWN BEFORE HE'S THROUGH THE DOOR
MANY OF THE WOUNDS APPEAR FRESH
MEANING, WHOEVER KILLED FEGREDO'S CREW IS "LIKELY STILL" HERE
AGHHHH

SPAWN'S ENTRANCE STOPS THE ASSAILANT FROM FURTHER DISEMBOWELING AN ALREADY DEAD SEGREDO
BUT LIKE A WILD WOLF THE THING HUNCHED OVER ITS PREY, PROTECTING ITS KILL FROM ANY WOULD BE PREDATOR
HISSSS

JESUS... IT'S ANOTHER ONE, I THINK.
UNBELIEVABLE.
WHAT ARE WE UP TO NOW? IS THAT THREE HEARTS?
FOUR. THAT'S IF THEY'RE ACTUALLY HEARTS AND NOT SOME OTHER VITAL ORGAN. JUST BAG IT AND STICK IT WITH THE OTHERS. WE'LL REASSESS EVERYTHING IN THE MORNING.
I'VE JUST BEEN TOLD, WE'RE NOT DONE. CALL CAME IN SAYING THEY WANT US TO WRAP UP ASAP, DR. MILNER.
THEY SAID THE BOSS IS HERE UNANNOUNCED.
SIX MONTHS AGO, GERARD MILNER'S CAREER WAS OVER

DISGRACED AND OSTRACIZED, HE'D GIVEN UP ALL HOPE OF EVER WORKING AGAIN. UNTIL ONE EVENING HIS PHONE RANG WITH AN OFFER OF A DIRECTORSHIP AT A PRIVATE RESEARCH FACILITY.
THAT NIGHT, AFTER GOING TO SLEEP, HE WAS SURPRISED TO WAKE UP THE NEXT MORNING IN THE PRIVATE QUARTERS OF HIS NEW WORKPLACE.
SINCE HIS ARRIVAL, HE HASN'T STEPPED OUTSIDE OF "THE ZOO," AS IT'S KNOWN TO STAFF, A SINGLE TIME.
NO ONE WILL CONFIDE TO GERARD ITS EXACT LOCATION, BUT HE SUSPECTS PERHAPS IT'S DEEP UNDERGROUND.
THOUGH HE'S NOT EVEN SURE IF HE'S ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COMPLEX... FOR NOW, AT LEAST, HE HAS NO DESIRE TO DO SO.
GOOD EVENING, CORDELIA.
NOT INTERRUPTING, AM I?
OF COURSE NOT.


IT'S NOTHING THAT CAN'T WAIT UNTIL LATER. ONE OF OUR CREATURES JUST **DIED** IN ITS CELL LAST NIGHT, WE WERE FINISHING THE AUTOPSY TRYING TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF DEATH.
ANY LUCK?
MY THEORY IS, THAT, POSS.BIL.ITY, IT MAY HAVE BEEN ALLERGIC TO SOME OF THE FOOD FROM THIS ERA.
WE WON'T KNOW ANYTHING CONCLUSIVE UNTIL WE'VE RUN A **FULL** BATTERY OF TESTS.
AND SINCE THERE'S STILL SO MUCH WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT ITS PHYSIOLOGY, IT COULD ALSO BE THAT IT JUST REACHED THE END OF ITS NORMAL LIFESPAN.


IN THE MEANTIME, I'VE GATHERED ALL THE SPECIMENS YOU REQUESTED. THEY'RE ALL WAITING FOR YOU IN THE PEN.
ONCE YOU'VE MADE YOUR FINAL SELECTION, LET ME KNOW, AND WE CAN START MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR ITS RELEASE.

I'D LIKE YOU TO RUN A FEW ASSESSMENTS FIRST, TO MAKE SURE THEY'RE UP TO THE TASK.
YOU SURE? SOME OF THEM ARE IN QUITE A **VULNERABLE** STATE.

I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT TOO MUCH, IF WE BREAK A FEW, WE CAN AFFORD IT...

...AFTER ALL, WE'VE GOT PLENTY TO CHOOSE FROM.
TO BE CONTINUED

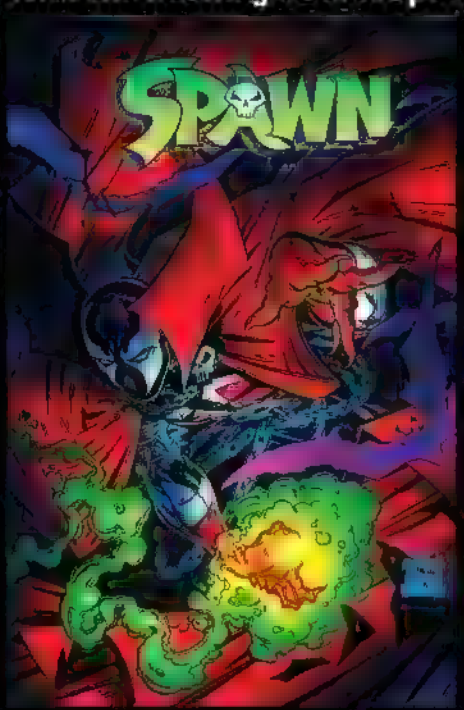
1:7:1:2

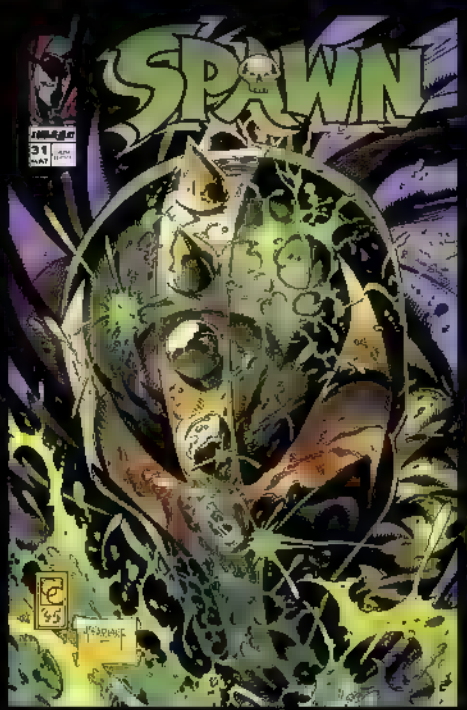
SPAWNING GROUND

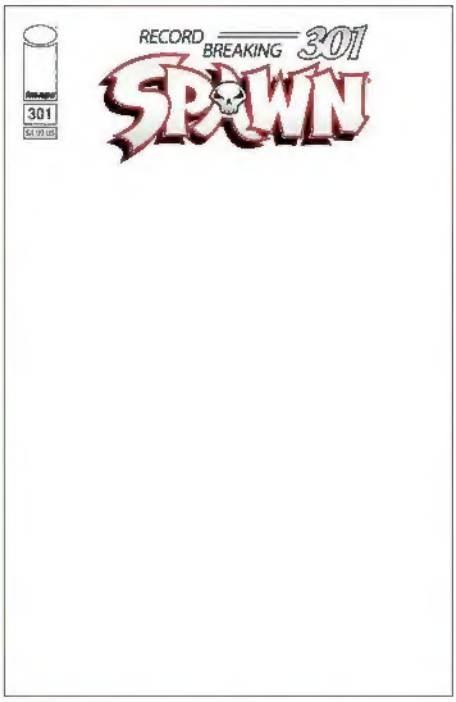
PRESENTS:

THE BREAKDOWN

We've had A LOT of incredible artwork gracing the cover of Spawn over the last 30 years. It's hard to choose favorites, but here are a few of ours from across this record-breaking run. Which covers are we missing? Tell us what covers you love! Show us your favorites with the hashtag #CoverSpawn!







Do you have a question or comment about Spawn? If so, e-mail it to us at:
spawninground@mcfarlane.com

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THE SCORCHED

JANUARY 2022

SPAWN 326

JANUARY 2022

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